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The Muslim Voice

FEBRUARY 2001 VOLUME 7 ISSUE 4 SHAWWAL 1421

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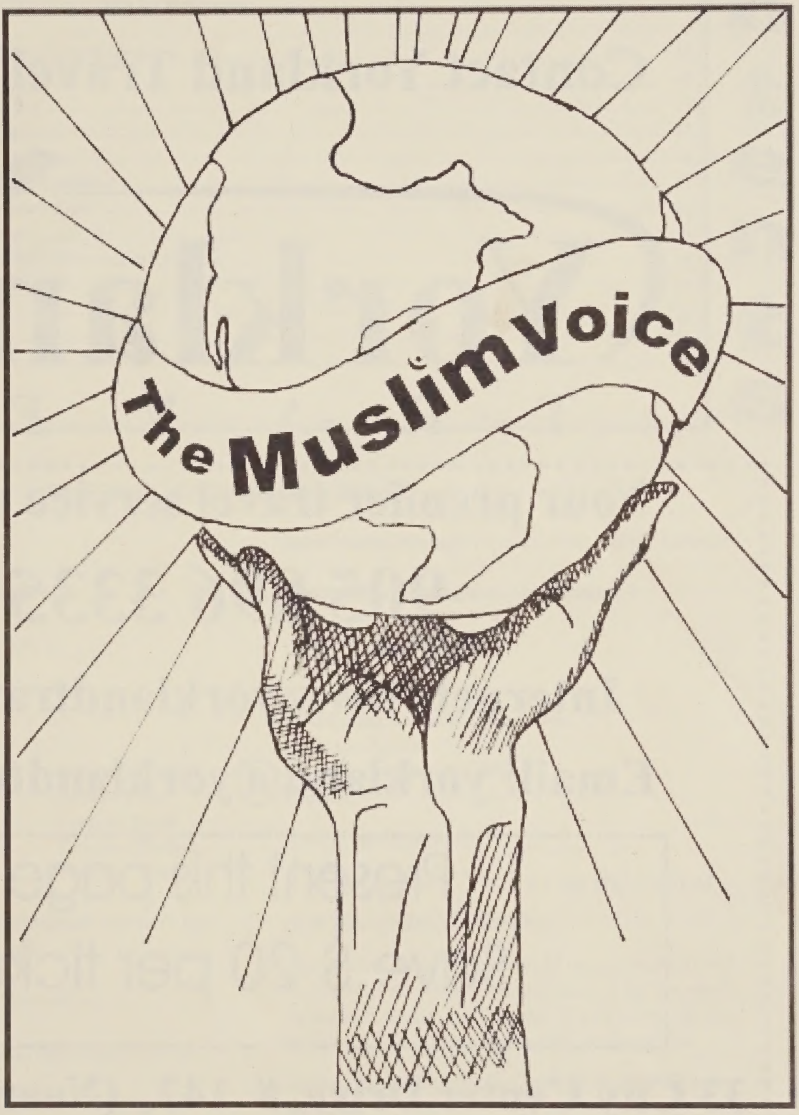

MARRIAGE IN THE WORLD OF ISLAM

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Cover sketch designed by Omar McKnight, Graphic Designer
The cover drawing symbolizes how the Muslim (the hand) is enpowered throughout the world with Islam, and how the banner of truth - "The Muslim Voice" will ultimately prevail, Insha'Allah.
Cover logo designed by Abeer Chowdhury, UofT (St. George), Year 3, Chemical Eng.

The President's Message

Assalamu Alaikum *Dear Brothers and Sisters in Islam*

The topic of marriage is an immensely integral issue within Islam. As such, it plays an important role in creating the social environment which Islam endeavors to create in a community. It becomes an even more pertinent topic for youth who have grown up and are residing in a non-Muslim country, surrounded by a cultural climate that greatly conflicts with the values expressed by Muslims. It is essential to awaken to this realization and individually take the time to carefully examine and reflect upon the way in which Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) and his beloved Messenger (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) have spiritually and systematically dealt with the multitude of issues encompassing marriage. The following merely serves to scratch the surface of this enlightening topic and bring about an acceptance of how much attention it should demand from us.

Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) has ordained marriage for pious and chaste individuals of mature age to enter into as a logically *halal* institution as they progress through life. It is a dynamic, demanding, and very personal relation between two individuals of opposite gender. Consequently, Islam regards marriage as a strong bond and a challenging commitment to life itself, society, and a way to ensure the meaningful existence of humans. Subsequently what further heightens its' importance is understanding that this commitment is not only made between the married partners but to Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) as well. This clearly serves to cement the responsibilities incumbent upon the couple.

This relationship has been perpetuating itself ever since Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) created humankind through Adam and has thus always been ordained upon us. Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) says:

"O mankind! Reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from the twain scattered countless men and women." [Qur'an 4:1]

Furthermore contemplating upon the *Hadith* that "when a Muslim marries, he has thereby perfected half his religion; so let him be God-minded and careful with the other half"[1] should immediately cause one to understand how serious and compulsory (upon capable individuals) such a commitment truly is.

Another illustration of the beauty of marriage is so eloquently and wisely stated by Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) as follows:

"And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your hearts; verily in that are signs for those who reflect." [Qur'an 30:21]

Thus the husband and wife relation in Islam is an uplifting and comforting one, both for the couple and society at large. It is successfully achieved through maintaining a dynamic balance that respects and adheres to the varying rights afforded by Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) to the male and female. These rights are based upon Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*)'s infinite wisdom on the differently innate characteristics, attributes, and roles that He Himself has given to the husband and wife. Islam recognizes the naturally inherent differences that exist between a man and a woman, yet it advocates and helps create an equality which incorporates such disparities, so that a successful marriage is achieved. Thus in Islam there is no need or place for the abusive male chauvinist or the overzealous feminist demanding equalities in areas that serve no beneficial purpose and may even conflict with Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*)'s divine laws.

Thus youth considering marriage, especially in this society, should take the time to realize the great duty they have as Muslims to ensure that the banner of Islam remains here and that their children are raised under a happy and healthy union. This will only serve to fortify the presence of Islam in the years to come. Good marriages require patience, kindness, humility, sacrifice, empathy, love, understanding, forgiveness, respect, and hard work. Thus Muslims should employ great wisdom in choosing a spouse, without having to face external pressures. They should choose a person with whom they can truly envision life long happiness, while maintaining a sense of purpose in line with the principles of Islam. May Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) ease our decisions and bring us contentment and may He fortify the *Ummah* and the sacred bonds that hold it together. *Ameen.*

[1]Abdalati, Hammudah. Islam in Focus. Published by WAMY, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 1972. Pg.114.

Wasallamu Alaikum,
Ahmed Rafi Mian
President, Muslim Students Association,
University of Toronto, St. George

Message from The Muslim Voice

Assalamu Alaikum!

Alhamdulillah, we meet again, with a new issue of *The Muslim Voice* ready for your reading pleasure. The staff have worked very hard to have the magazine contain original informative articles. Of course, without your continued support and suggestions for our magazine, this would not have been a reality.

Allah has blessed us all in many ways, and has given us each our unique gifts and talents. Marriage is an institution which we must enter with pure hearts, whilst keeping in mind the reason for our Creation. We should think of the Hereafter before, during, and after the whole process as Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) has given us guidelines for all of these. This life is a test, and in order to pass it, we need to obey our Lord's commands to the best of our capabilities.

This is all easy to say, but are we actually implementing it? A quick assessment around us shows a situation that needs a lot of improving. Too often, in requirements for a spouse, too much emphasis is based on the "beauty" of the spouse, or on his/her "financial status." The function of the wedding itself has become so lavish that in certain "Muslim" countries food had to be banned from weddings altogether!

Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) has stressed moderation in everything that we do. Furthermore, our intention is what most matters to Allah. If we do something to gain the respect of the people in our community, we may get that, but it has no bearing on Allah. If, however, our intention is to please Allah and all our actions reflect this, then Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) will surely reward us.

With this in mind, in this issue of the magazine, we have attempted to highlight important aspects about marriage in Islam. Although care has been taken to verify the information, we are all human and we apologize for any errors we may have made.

May Allah guide us all and show us the true path in everything that we do, *Ameen.*

Wassalamu Alaikum

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WWW.TMVONLINE.COM

A woman from the offspring of Ja'far was afraid lest her guardian marry her (to somebody) against her will. So she sent for two elderly men from the Ansar, 'Abdur-Rahman and Mujammi', the two sons of Jariya, and they said to her, "Don't be afraid, for Khansa' bint Khidam was given by her father in marriage against her will, then the Prophet cancelled that marriage." [Narrated by Al Qasim (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*)]

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

YOUR MSA HAS A NEW WEBSITE!

- tired of sending emails to MSA-L and having them bounce back to you?
- tired of seeing ancient announcements on the MSA website?
- want a forum to discuss your ideas and thoughts with other Muslim students?

Alhamdulillah, the MSA has a NEW web site, with a new look and CURRENT information, and a discussion forum to meet all your needs!
Visit our…
FAQ section to see answers to commonly asked questions, i.e. halal restaurants near campuses, mosques in the Toronto/Ontario area, etc…
Discussion Forum and post unlimited messages to share with other Muslims
Events Page to see what the MSA has scheduled for YOU!
Educational Services for valuable tips on getting into Medical school
Islamic Services for prayer locations on campus and prayer times
The Muslim Voice link to your favorite magazine.

…and **tons** more! Don't delay, visit us soon and be sure to share your tips and suggestions on how we can improve it further.

www.utoronto.ca/muslim

SISTERS' HALAQA

During the sisters' *halaqa* (study circle) we practice reading and do the *tafseer* (explanation) of *surahs* from the 29th chapter in the *Qur'an*. In addition, we are studying the forty hadiths of al-Imam an-Nawawi. And *Insha'Allah* this semester we will begin the book Muslim's Character. All sisters are welcome to come, as we strive to increase our Islamic knowledge together. The *halaqas* are held every other week *insha'Allah* beginning from 4-6 p.m. at the International Student Center. Please come in and look at the board at to find out which room we are in. There is no need to sign up, just come whenever you can and we will be glad to see you. For more information contact the Sisters' Events Coordinator, at reemelhennawy@hotmail.com.

ANNUAL SISTERS' EID HALAQA

The MSA held its annual Sister's Eid Halaqa on Wednesday January 10th. *Alhamdulillah* the event was a success, with great company, great gifts and most importantly great food. I think we all gained a few extra pounds that day. We had a getting to know each other game, a quiz competition, and a gift exchange. *Insha'Allah* we hope to have another *Eid halaqa for Eid Al Adha*, so stay posted for more news about that.

Do U write poetry?
Short Stories? R you good in art?

Use your talents to serve Allah!

We hope, *insha'Allah*, to publish a special edition of *The Muslim Voice* composed of Islamic creative literature and art by university students across the Greater Toronto Area. The goal of the project is to help show the beauty of Islam by using creative techniques. This is a long term project but don't delay! Get those creative juices flowing and send your submissions to icl@publicist.com.

As with all submissions, please include your name, University and Campus, Year of Study, and Major. For more details, contact us at icl@publicist.com.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

KNOW ANY GOOD NASHEEDS? ARE YOU AMAZING AT QIRA'AT?
CAN YOU SING, ACT, READ POETRY OR JUGGLE? DO YOU HAVE A TALENT?
IF THE ANSWER IS YES, WHY NOT COME SHOWCASE YOUR TALENT AT THE

SISTERZ TALENT NIGHT

**** Friday February 16 at 4:30 P.M, *insha'Allah* ****
Stay tuned to MSA-L for venue details.

Insha'Allah, the Sisters of the University of Toronto, St George, Muslim Students Association are pleased to invite you to perform or attend this great event, also featuring a Multicultural Fashion Show.

Please contact sisterzonly@egroups.com with the following information:
· your name and that of any group members
· e-mail addresses for the whole group
· University and Campus
· a brief and tentative outline of your proposed act

Please reply as soon as possible. For more information, contact us at: sisterzonly@egroups.com.

THE ANDALUSIA PRIZE: 2001

The Andalusia Prize is an annual prize for the best short fiction written by a student, awarded to honor the literary legacy of Islamic Spain.

Prize
The Prize is **$300** (Canadian).

Jury
Judging will be conducted by Reshma Baig, Yahiya Emerick, and Abul Arifin Syed.

Deadlines
Entries must reach us on or before March 20th 2001 (extended from the originally selected date). Ensure you are on time by mailing before the 20th.

The Andalusia Prize web site will announce the Shortlist of finalist stories April 1st and **The Andalusia Prize winner(s) will be announced April 20th.**

Submissions
The Andalusia Prize is open to any secondary school or undergraduate university student. Submissions are restricted to works of short fiction, written in English, that are **1,000 to 9,000 words long.** Send your work by mail as a printed manuscript or as a disk. **Please do not send the only copy of your work.** Also provide us with your name, address, and information of the school you attend (address, phone number, e-mail, web site); and, if you wish, send us a paragraph about you, your studies, or your interests (e.g. favorite books).

Unfortunately, only mailed manuscripts (as a print-out or as a disk) can be accepted. Manuscripts sent by e-mail will not be accepted. Please e-mail us at the address below, however, if you have any questions.

Works of short fiction should show an appreciation for the mechanics of the English language.

For more details, please contact us at:
Andalusia_Prize@mail.com or **http://come.to/andalusia_prize**

Submit stories to:
The Andalusia Prize,
704 Spadina Ave.
Toronto, Ontario CANADA
Station P., Box 249
M5S 2S8

The Prize money is the donation of a local Muslim businessman. The Prize seeks sponsors. Address the e-mail address above (or mail, if you prefer) to sponsor any aspect of the prize.

The Muslim Voice is proud to be a sponsor of this endeavor

Contest News

and the winners are...

The Muslim Voice staff is pleased to announce the winners of our two competitions advertised in the October Issue. We had a contest for Best Poem and for Best Cover Sketch. *Alhamdulillah*, many of you participated, and although the decisions weren't easy, our judges came to the following conclusions:

Best Poem: Abul Arifin, York Univeristy, Year 4, English for *This Life is a Bridge*
Best Cover: Omar Mcknight, Graphic Designer

Jazakum Allahu Khairun to all who participated. To everyone else — we have more exciting competitions going on, so do participate *insha'Allah*!
If you would like to sponsor a competition, please contact us at tmv@post.com.

Are You Talented??

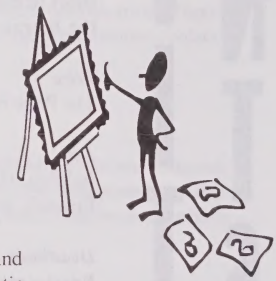
After the great success of our last competitions, The Muslim Voice is now holding two more competitions for you to participate! As always, we have our cover competition, and our new competition is "Best Calligraphy/Islamic art piece" *Insha'Allah*, this is your chance to display your hidden talents, win a prize you will enjoy, and do something for a good cause ☺. Encourage your friends and family to participate as well!

Best Calligraphy/Islamic Art piece: It should be 8 x 5.5, with no Quranic verses in Arabic script and done in Black and White ink. Our theme for the next issue is "Family", so your Calligraphy/Art can reflect this if you wish, i.e in the shape of a home, etc. But this is not necessary to qualify as an entry. Be creative!

Cover Competition: Now this is especially for those of you who are artistically inclined. This competition is ongoing for every issue. The restrictions are:

- no *Qur'anic* verses in Arabic Script are allowed
- no faces are allowed.

You are free to choose the theme of your work.



Deadline for All Submissions is February 23, 2001.

Method of submission: Both the cover sketch and art pice are to be done in black ink, and submitted via email or dropped off in the TMV submissions envelope, located in the attic of the International Student Center. Make sure that all your submissions state clearly what competition the submission is for. There is no restriction to the number of the pieces you may submit. **With each submission be sure to include: Your name, your year and program, and university or school campus and name**.

The Muslim Voice would like to hear from YOU!
Please tell us what you like about our magazine, and how we can improve it to make it better for you.
Would you like to be a part of The Muslim Voice? If so, contact us at tmv@post.com.
Visit our website and participate in the discussion forum - www.tmvonline.com

We also welcome your articles, sketches, creative writing, and letters on any topic, just mail them to us at tmv@post.com, or drop them off in the TMV envelope on the 3rd Floor of the International Student Center!

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HOOK, LINE AND SINKER

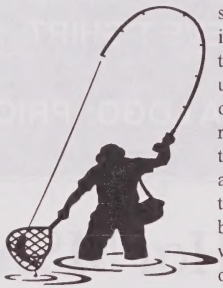
"Ring around the finger, rope around the neck"- ever heard this expression? It is called **fiction** because in Islam "wedding rings" are non-existent and marriage is a delight, not a death. So let's talk about reality! The reality of the situation is we are young Muslims living in North America, in the 21st century, surrounded by non-Islamic values, and almost all desperately single searching for Mr./Miss Right, who does not seem to be coming. For many, your initial reaction may be to deny the above statement, however, if you were to seriously think about it, you will find much truth in it.

The first step is to admit that you have a problem. We are almost all single, and thoroughly confused about marriage. Now let's figure out why. Ever wonder why that brother's pretty gray eyes turn green every Wednesday? Or how that sister grew 5 inches of hair overnight? The mysteries of technology eh? It is a fact that many of us today are shallow individuals. When questioned as to what we would like in a spouse, or the "love of our life," our honest answers would have something to do with beauty, wealth, or even family status - quite the opposite of what Islam teaches us. Islam is our guide and by following it we find success. In Islam we are taught to look for piety and good character in our intended spouse. As Abu Hurairah (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*) narrates, the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said,

"Men choose women for four reasons: for their money, for their rank, for their beauty and for their religion, but marry one who is religious and you will succeed" (Bukhari, Muslim).

So how do you determine the level of piety a person has? Only Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) knows what is in the hearts of His creation, hence the reason it is recommended to perform *Salat-ul-Istikhara*. However we still need some guidelines to determine how "righteous" a person is. We must look at a person's behavior; the way he/she conducts his/herself, to see if he/she has at least the basic Islamic *Adaab* (manners), such as being polite, kind, respectful, humble, controls his/hers tongue, etc. Those who are a little bit desperate may be putting up a front so you might have to indulge yourself in a fact-finding mission (i.e., casually ask around or get your parents/friends to find out how sincere they are). If you know the individuals whereabouts at exactly 1:18 p.m. that day you are searching a bit too hard and I suggest you step off a little. When you feel satisfied with their *deen* (faith), and feel that person makes Islam a priority in his/her life then move onto the next step.

Character - this can be somewhat included with compatibility, however the term "compatibility" is not the same as the West defines it. Compatibility in Islam does not mean you adopt the 'dating scene' to see if you would choose the same ice cream as they would. This is not crucial to your marriage nor is it acceptable in Islam. A person's character is projected through their understanding of life, religion, responsibilities, etc. You and your potential should be on the same wavelength; otherwise you may face communication problems. In marriage, lack of communication between couples may bring a rather distressing challenge. Your general interests should be somewhat the same (apart from Islam) because there is only so much you can say about the weather in one day. Other than that, you are <u>almost</u> set.



Beauty, wealth and family status still matter and should not be entirely neglected. Their importance is not exaggerated in Islam because they are material concepts. There must be some sort of mutual attraction between the couple for obvious reasons. Wealth can be an issue because it is the responsibility for the husband to provide for his family and it is recommended he have a stable job. But we must remember the example of our beloved Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*), who led a simple life. Our reward is in the hereafter and Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) is the best of Providers. So do not make "Beemers" a requirement for marriage or over-do it on the dowry (it is meant to be a gift, not life insurance).

Many of us limit our spouse selection to cultural/racial groups. This way of thinking is understandable due to the fact that it may be easier for the couple and their families. However, culture in Islam should not be a major issue, because Islam is a way of life, and we should be careful not to give culture importance over our *deen*.

Finding a spouse and getting married is not an easy thing these days but as we all know, it is not impossible. We must continuously remind ourselves of our purpose in this life in order to keep our intentions pure. As a word of caution, only begin your spouse search if your intentions of marriage are sincere and you are not in for the "fun of it". This means do not go lining up a whole bunch of "potentials" telling them you will marry them when you won't. This will only cause their feelings to be hurt and make you out to be a playa/playette. For those brothers who want more than one wife, take it one step at a time.

Remember the blessings of your parents are very important, especially in regards to marriage. So do talk to them and make sure they play an active role in your decision. There is much experience, wisdom, and knowledge that you can gain from them.If things do not work out, keep in mind...

"... it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you, and Allah knows, while you do not know." [Qur'an 2:216]

May your search be easy! *Allahu Alam* (God knows best). Whatever good comes out of this it is from Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) alone, and whatever bad comes out of this it is mine.

"Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous." [Qur'an 25:74]

Ameen.

Shireen Patel

FORCED MARRIAGES

I recall coming home from an engagement party last winter. My close friend and her family gave me a ride home. At the time, her family was pressuring my friend and her older sister to get married. The parents believed it would be too difficult or unlikely that they would find good Muslim young men in Canada, and so they were resolved to take a family trip back "home." My friends didn't want to go back "home" to get married and I thought it worth an effort to challenge their father (who, without any doubt, is a wonderful man). I was sure there were many good Muslim brothers in Canada who would marry my lovely friends, and I told Uncle that he simply needed to look into a wider Muslim community. "But you are ——— and we are ———" is basically what I got, a bunch of cultural garbage. The pressure my friend and her sister faced to go back "home" to find partners dates back to high school. Since then, a few years had passed, and last year my friends gave in to the pressure.

Alhamdulillah, the older sister is happily engaged and we look forward to her *nikah insha'Allah*. But things didn't work out so favourably for the younger sister. "I knew that I wouldn't match up with a person from ———. I couldn't picture it," she recently told me. "I knew it. I knew that it was still there. . .They wanted a double wedding. . .My parents don't voice their opinion" but she felt the pressure to pick a lad. Less than a week before their flight to Canada, my friend spoke to a young man whom she said she would think about. She was forced however, to give a decision there. They knew very little about the young man and the day before the flight my friend realised that she was basically getting "lies non-stop." She thought to herself, "How do I tell my parents?" On her arrival in Canada, family and friends congratulated her and many still expect her to marry this stranger. My friend is unhappy but the family is more concerned about what people will say if the "engagement" is broken rather than what my friend is feeling.

This is not a case of a forced marriage. She is not married – yet. Even if she was married, I do not label it a forced marriage. There is a lot I haven't told you, especially things from the parents' perspective. Reality is complex and Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) knows best. But this sort of pressure is not uncommon. Have forced marriages taken a different appearance? How far are such scenarios from actual forced marriages?

Forced marriages are not Islamic problems but cultural ones. How do we know this? Let us contrast the types of marriages in the Days of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah)* to what Islam offered in the time of our beloved Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wassalam*) and to what Islam still has to offer today. Aisha, (*radi'Allahu 'anha*), states:

Islam views marriage as a sacred act..."The act of marriage is sacred and is ordained by Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) Himself and practised by His messengers. The act of marriage in Islam is not a transaction. It is a form of worship."

"*There were four kinds of marriages during Jahiliyyah'. One was as we have it today; that is, a man would ask a person for the hand of his daughter or his ward in marriage, would pay the marriage-gift, and would marry her. The second type was that a man would tell his wife, in between her menstrual periods, to call such and such man and become pregnant by him. He would stay away from her and would not touch her until the signs of pregnancy appeared. If he then wished, he would have intercourse with her. He adopted this method to obtain a son of high lineage. A third form of marriage was polyandry. A group of men, less than ten, would come to a woman and have sexual intercourse with her. If she became pregnant and then gave birth to a child, and a few nights passed after childbirth, she would call them. No one could refuse this call. When they would all gather, she would tell them, 'You know the result. I have given birth to a child.' Then she would point to one of them and would say, 'This is his child.' The child would then be named after that person and would be considered his, and he could not deny this. A fourth form of marriage was that many men would go to a woman, and she was willing to accept any. Actually, these were prostitutes and would place a flag in front of their doors as a sign. Anyone who wished would go to them. If such a woman became pregnant, after the delivery many people would gather by her and would call an expert in recognising resemblance. To whomever he would ascribe the child's paternity, the child would be considered his and he could not refuse it.*" (Reported in Bukhari, The Book of Marriage)

Thus, marriage in pre-Islamic Arabia was simply a transaction.

In contrast, Islam views marriage as a sacred act. As Shaikh Ahmad Ali in his lecture on "Forced Marriages" states, "Islam first explained to them, that marriage is not a transaction, and a woman is not a good or commodity which can be bought and sold at the price the *wali* determines and keeps. The act of marriage is sacred and is ordained by Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) Himself and practised by His messengers. The act of marriage in Islam is not a transaction. It is a form of worship."[1] A woman is a human being with rights. With respect to marriage, she must be consulted and her permission

cont'd on p.21

Thabit heard Anas saying, "A woman came to the Prophet offering herself to him in marriage, saying, 'Have you got any interest in me (i.e. would you like to marry me)?' " Anas's daughter said, "How shameless that woman was!" On that Anas said, "She is better than you, for she presented herself to Allah's Apostle (for marriage)." [Narrated by Thabit (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*)]

Rights of Husbands & Rights of Wives

A happy family life is a crucial aspect of maintaining harmony and peace in the society. Islam puts great emphasis on family values and has clearly defined the rights and responsibilities of a husband and a wife; in order to keep a happy marriage. Both women and men have equal status in Islam:

But, in accordance with justice, the wife's right (with regard to their husbands) are equal to the (husband's) rights with regard to them, although men are a degree above them; and Allah is Almighty, Wise.

[Qur'an 2:228]

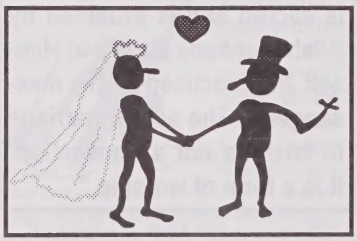
The statement that men are a degree above women means that authority within the household has been given to the husband in preference to the wife because a heavier burden has been placed on his shoulders.[1]

According to the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*)'s teachings, the wife should regard her husband over and above everything else and she should remain faithful to him. The husband must also consider her wishes and preferences. His requests take precedence over those of her parents, but in neither case is she allowed to obey anyone in what constitutes disobedience to Allah.

The husband, on the other hand, ought to consider his wife as a blessing of Allah and he should give her ungrudgingly his love, hold her in high esteem and look after her needs and comforts to the best of his ability. Abu Hurairah narrated that "the believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best disposition and the best of you are those who are best to their wives" (Related by Tirmidhi). Men should bear any shortcomings of women in view of the following verse of the Qur'an:

Live with them in kindness; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which God has placed much good. [Qur'an 4:19]

The husband is the head of the family and is responsible to ensure a decent standard of living for his family, according to his means. The Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*)'s companions once asked him: " Messenger of Allah, what rights [does] a man's wife holds against him?" Among his answers were: "That you feed her when you find food to eat, and dress her when you dress yourself..." (Related by Abu Dawood and Ibn Hibban). Thus, according to the teachings of Islam it is the duty of the husband to support his family. If a woman has more wealth than her husband, her wealth does not deprive her of her right to be supported by him. If he takes advantage of her wealth in order to leave his duty unfulfilled, without having first secured her consent to



this arrangement, then he is accountable for his misdeed. It is open to her to seek divorce on grounds of her not being supported by her husband. Thus, when a woman earns something, her earnings belong totally to her; and her husband cannot put any claim to her earnings.[2]

The duties of a wife toward her husband, according to Islamic Law, are also well defined. Many people argue that since the man earns, the wife is supposed to look after the house. However, nowhere in Islam is a woman forbidden to work or is supposed to do the household work. When a woman wants to go out to work, her husband may prevent her from doing so if he feels that her job will seriously affect the family, especially with regards to the upbringing of the children. However, if she was working when they got married, and he has not indicated to her at the time of the proposal that he wants her to quit her job, this is taken as consent on his part to her working. He may not withdraw that consent after marriage.[3] The question may be raised that who then is supposed to do the housework? Strictly from the point of view of rights and duties, it is not the duty of the woman to do the housework in her husband's home. But marriage is not all about duties and rights. There is what Islam terms "companionship and goodwill". It is under this heading that the duties and responsibilities of the family are divided between the husband and wife. Once, there was some disagreement between Fatimah, the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*)'s daughter and her husband. They presented their case before him, requesting him to define their responsibilities for them. The Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said to his daughter: "You do the work that must be done inside the home, and he does what needs to be done outside." This means that if a woman fails to do the work that has to be done inside the family home, she fails in meeting the requirement of companionship and goodwill.[4] However, in today's world, where most families depend on the income of both the husband and wife, it can be argued that according to the requirements of companionship and goodwill, it is imperative that both man and

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Nafi narrated to me that 'Abdullah said that Allah's Apostle (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) forbade the *Shighar*. I asked Nafi', "What is the Shighar?" He said, "It is to marry the daughter of a man and marry one's daughter to that man (at the same time) without Mahr (in both cases); or to marry the sister of a man and marry one's own sister to that man without Mahr." Some people said, "If one, by a trick, marries on the basis of Shighar, the marriage is valid but its condition is illegal." The same scholar said regarding Al-Mut'a, "The marriage is invalid and its condition is illegal." Some others said, "The Mut'a and the Shighar are permissible but the condition is illegal." [Narrated by Abdullah (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*)]

SHATTERED VOWS

Imagine living a life of constant fear, where your words and actions can bring you great physical and mental torture. No, it is not the fear of Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala)*, for fearing the creature, we run towards him, not from Him. It is rather the kind of fear that enslaves you and I to the cruelty of another human being, one which Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala)* commanded to guard the rights of a Muslim woman: your lawful husband. He is a man who finds violence acceptable to solve any disagreement he may have with his wife; slapping, punching and verbally demeaning the one whom The Preserver of human life entrusted him to love, honour and respect. And if you were to take an issue with such a treatment, the response of the one who incurs the abuse will be that the *Qur'an* and the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds gives him the permission to do so. Having said that, let us explore the Blessed book of Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*)and the sayings of our beloved Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*), in the hope that we may shed a light on some of the cultural misconceptions that "justifies" violence against women, the treatment of wives in particular.

Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) tells us:

And of His signs is that He created for you (men) wives from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are portents for folk who reflect. [Rome: 21]

These beautiful verses describe the purpose for which Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) created women for men. Marriage in Islam is not about physical beauty, or wealth, for surely both will fade with time, but rather it entails deeper and more spiritually rooted reasons from Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala)*. Scholars have divided the explanation of the above *ayah* into two parts: a marriage of love, and a marriage of mercy. The first one focuses on the earlier stages of a relationship, where the young couple have attraction and passion for one another. On the other hand, the second stage describes the presence of kindness and mercy in the later years of the couple's marriage, where age changes the appearance and the energy that was in abundance in their youth. It is in the wisdom of Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) to teach us by example, in the hope that we may apply it to our lives. A marriage between a believing man and a believing woman is one that has affection, patience, persistence to recommend good for one another, and kindness at times of difficulty. In the absence of such qualities, Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) calls for the couple to release one another in goodness.

Few God-fearing Muslims will dispute the importance of treating women justly, and giving them their equal rights. Nevertheless certain verses may seem vague to some, when considering the presence of a dispute between a couple. One particular verse which is often misunderstood by many Muslim families is:

> *If one gender was favoured over another in the Qur'an, then each one of us would have had a set of rules that would lead us to enter paradise, or hell fire. We are all awarded/punished the same in good and bad deeds, regardless of our exterior difference.*

Men are responsible for women, in what Allah has made some of them excel over the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are righteous, God-fearing ones, guardians of themselves and their household. As for those from whom ye fear unlawful arrogance, advise them and do not share their bed, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Lo! Allah is ever High Exalted, Great.

[The Women: 34-35]

Three words need to be clarified in this verse: '*qawaam*', '*fadl*', and '*dharb*'. Many have confused Allah's (*subhana wa ta'ala*) word of men being '*qawaamuun*' over women to mean that men are superior over women, which is not what the word means linguistically and Islamically. When the Creator uses classical Arabic words in The Holy Book, He always chooses those that will give maximum effect, preventing any confusion and disagreement that may occur among the Muslims. The word *Qawaam* comes from *Qaa'im*, which means erect, rising up, responsible and watching over. Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) commands men to be the guardians of women, in what He favoured them over others, in financial responsibility and not because of the difference in gender. He does not favour a man over a woman, neither a woman over a man because of their physicality. If one gender was favoured over another in the *Qur'an*, then each one of us would have had a set of rules that would lead us to enter paradise, or hell fire. We are all rewarded/punished the same in good and bad deeds, regardless of our exterior difference. We are equal, but with different responsibilities, and this must be understood to eradicate the mistreatment of wives, because abuse occurs when a man considers a woman to be inferior to him. The problem of violence against women in marriages is one of status, rather than pathology (with the exception of cases where one's sanity is in question).

To better explain the meaning of the word '*dharb*' in the second part of Chapter

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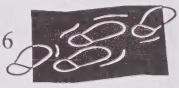

The Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said, "A virgin should not be married till she is asked for her consent; and the matron should not be married till she is asked whether she agrees to marry or not." It was asked, "O Allah's Apostle! How will she (the virgin) express her consent?" He said, "By keeping silent." Some people said, "If a virgin is not asked for her consent and she is not married, and then a man, by playing a trick presents two false witnesses that he has married her with her consent and the judge confirms his marriage as a true one, and the husband knows that the witnesses were false ones, then there is no harm for him to consummate his marriage with her and the marriage is regarded as valid." [Narrated by Abu Huraira (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*)]

ADVICE ON HOOKING UP-

ISLAMICALLY

Many societies, including some "Islamic" states, are plagued with un-Islamic cultural practices, some of which are manifested at the time of marriage. Although a couple is seldom prevented from seeing one another, at least in our western society, there are places and people who do prohibit this. A severe and rigid system is used where neither one of the marrying couple is allowed to see the other. It is considered an insult to the dignity of the bride's family for the poor man to ask for even a picture of his future wife. This often results in an unhappy marriage or even a divorce. The marriage becomes analogous to the act of buying a watermelon! You can either enjoy it happily or add it to your jar of pickles hoping that it will fit!

Concerning this, let us take a look at what The Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) has said. A person came to the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) and informed him that he was intending to marry a certain woman from the ansar. The Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) asked the person, "Have you seen this woman (that you are thinking of marrying)?" He replied, "No." The Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said, "Go have a look at her" (audio tape by Shaikh Ahmad Ali on Forced Marriages). Why? Simply because it is possible to dislike some aspect of the person. We see from this that Islam not only gives permission to look at the intended partner but also ENCOURAGES one to look.

In the west, methods swing to the other extreme. The western culture encourages dating and more. We are bombarded with the media that paints illusions and makes what is forbidden in Islam look cool. It is not surprising then that couples take freedoms that are forbidden in Islam prior to marriage. A man may be allowed (by her parents) to salute her by touching her or to be alone with her as long as he pleases. The latter is actually a slippery slope because it may lead to unfortunate and undesirable consequences.

Obviously, both extremes of interaction are intrinsically wrong as explained. The engaged couple should see each other and talk to learn more about one another as per Islamic etiquette.

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TIPS BEFORE ENTERING CLOUD 9

DO'S AND DON'T'S OF ENGAGEMENTS

So you think "Prince Charming" or "Miss Right" has walked into your life, or at least they have a lot of potential, huh? Well all this is lovely, but there are a few things one must keep in mind before getting lost in "cloud 9".

Courting in Islam is not about dating, stalking, or harassing someone's phone line, as these are not the ways of a Muslim. First and foremost ones intention should SINCERELY be marriage. If this is not yet established then take it as a hint that you should not be looking. Secondly, the intended couple may "look" at each other but avoid touching or meeting privately. The term "look" refers to the couple scanning each other (just enough to make a decision) as opposed to lowering ones gaze. This should be not done as a means for fulfilling ones desires or lust. Nor is it an excuse for lack of modesty or Islamic *Adaab* (manners). Correspondence and talking is permissible, however only in the presence of the female's *wali* (guardian, i.e. Father) or the male's representative. Exchanging photographs and internet courting are highly non recommended acts because of their open revealing nature. On the occurrence of an engagement taking place, this does not nullify the rule or permit dating.

As well, in Islam the only form of an "engagement" is the actual proposal. In fact, one of the requirements of marriage that can void a marriage if it does not take place is the proposal, which could either be accepted or rejected. Contrary to popular opinion, engagement parties, rings and any other cultural practices are non-existent in Islam. Much of these customs have been adopted from the Christians, and some were said to be Pharaonic practices.

Let us always bear in mind that we are Muslims, and therefore must act according to Islamic teachings. Abu Hurairah (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*) narrated that the Messenger (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said:

> "The Jews and the Christians do not dye (their grey hair), so you shall do the opposite of what they do (i.e., dye your grey hair and breards.)" (Related by Bukhari)

So in short, no more getting down on one knee with a ring that costs more than your car, house, or any of that sort of thing. It is more like "hey I'll have my daddy call your daddy." ☺ And when his daddy calls her daddy and things work out so you get married, then you can be on cloud nine for the rest of your life.

Shireen Patel

Sources:

- The Fiqh of Marriage in the Light of the Quran and Sunnah by Saalih ibn Ghaanim al-Sadlaan
- The Quest for Love & Mercy- Regulations for Marriage & Wedding in Islam by Muhammad al-Jibaly

HADITH FROM OUR BELOVED PROPHET (*SALLALLAHU ALAIHI WASALLAM*)

ALLAH'S MESSENGER (*SALLALLAHU ALAIHI WASALLAM*) SAID: A MAN MUST NOT MAKE PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE TO A WOMAN WHEN HIS BROTHER HAS DONE SO ALREADY. AND HE MUST NOT OFFER A PRICE FOR A THING FOR WHICH HIS BROTHER HAS ALREADY OFFERED A PRICE; AND A WOMAN MUST NOT BE COMBINED IN MARRIAGE WITH HER FATHER'S SISTER, NOR WITH HER MOTHER'S SISTER, AND A WOMAN MUST NOT ASK TO HAVE HER SISTER DIVORCED IN ORDER TO DEPRIVE HER OF WHAT BELONGS TO HER; BUT SHE MUST MARRY, BECAUSE SHE WILL HAVE WHAT ALLAH HAS DECREED FOR HER. [NARRATED ABU HURAIRAH (*RADI'ALLAHU 'ANHU*)]

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PROHIBITED MARRIAGE PARTNERS

Family is the essence of Islamic society and Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) has proscribed marriage as the means by which to bring families into existence. The *Shari'ah* has provided Muslims with guidelines when it comes to choosing a marriage partner. A man cannot just marry any woman he wishes to marry. "[M]arriages between men and women standing in a certain relationship to one another are prohibited" in Islam.[1] Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) says in the Quran:

> **And marry not those women whom your fathers married, except what has already happened (of that nature) in the past. Lo! it was ever lewdness and abomination, and an evil way. Forbidden unto you are your mothers and your daughters, and your sisters and your father's sisters and your mother's sisters, and your brother's daughters and your sister's daughters, and your foster-mothers and your foster-sisters, and your mothers-in-law and your step-daughters who are under your mother-in-law and your step-daughters who are under your protection (born) of your women unto whom you have gone into — but if you have not gone into them, then it is no sin for you (to marry their daughters) — and the wives of your sons from your own loins, and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already happened (of that nature) in the past. Allah is ever-Forgiving, Merciful.**
>
> [Quran 4:22 – 24]

Hence, a man is prohibited from marrying the following women:[2]

- His mother
- His step-mother
- His grandmother (including father's and mother's mothers and all preceding mothers e.g. great grandmothers)
- His daughter (including granddaughters and beyond)
- His sister (whether full, consanguine or uterine)
- His father's sisters (including paternal grandfather's sisters)
- His mother's sisters (including maternal grandmother's sisters)
- His brother's daughters
- His foster mother
- His foster mother's sister
- His sister's daughter
- His foster sister
- His wife's mother
- His step-daughter (i.e. a daughter by a former husband of a woman he has married if the marriage has been consummated. However, if such a marriage was not consummated, there is no prohibition)
- His real son's wife

The above are all permanent prohibitions — i.e. a man can NEVER legally marry a woman with whom he has any of the above said relationships.

There are also temporary prohibitions that arise due to special circumstances. As soon as the circumstances change, the prohibitions disappear. The temporary prohibitions are as follows:[3]

- A man must not have two sisters as wives at the same time nor can he marry a girl and her aunt at the same time.
- A man must not marry a woman who is already married. However this impediment is removed immediately if the marriage is dissolved either by the death of her former husband, or by divorce followed by completion of the period of *'iddah* (retreat).
- A man must not have more than four wives at one time. This impediment is, of course, removed as soon as one of the wives dies or is divorced.
- A man must not marry a woman during her *'iddah.*

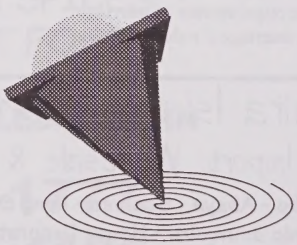
May Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) always guide us and help us make the right choices.

Sadiya Kukaswadia, University of Toronto (St. George), Year 4, Life Sciences

Sources:

- The above work was adapted from an article appearing at: http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/humanrelations/womeninislam/marriage.html#intro. The author is Prof. Abdur Rahman I. Doi,Professor and Director, Center for Islamic Legal Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaira, Nigeria.

1. http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/humanrelations/womeninislam/marriage.html#intro
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.



A man called Khidam married a daughter of his (to somebody) against her consent. 'If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan girls then marry (other) women of your choice.' And if somebody says to the guardian (of a woman), "Marry me to so-and-so," and the guardian remained silent or said to him, "What have you got?" And the other said, "I have so much and so much (Mahr)," or kept quiet, and then the guardian said, "I have married her to you," then the marriage is valid (legal). This narration was told by Sahl on the authority of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*). [Narrated by Abdur Rahman bin Yazid and Majammi bin Yazid (*radi'Allahu 'anhum*)]

Al-Istikhaarah: Seeking Divine Guidance

We are often faced with difficult choices pertaining to all aspects of our lives; whether they are related to our education, our families, or our future spouse. Allah (Glorious and Most High) has blessed us with the gift of *al-Istikhaarah*, a special supplication that we can make to seek His Guidance in curing our indecisiveness and solving our problems. By performing *al-Istikhaarah*, we are placing our utmost trust in Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*). Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) says in the Holy Qur'an:

And if any one puts his trust in God, sufficient is (God) for him.

[Qur'an, 65:3]

One does not make *al-Istikhaarah* for actions that are obligatory upon him or forbidden to him. This is because obligatory and forbidden actions are orders from Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) and taken without question. One would not perform *al-Istikhaarah* to determine whether one should go for *Hajj* or not as this is an action that has been ordained upon us. Rather, *al-Istikhaarah* should be performed in regards to affairs where a choice is involved. For example, it should be performed when choosing the group or people you should travel with or the person you should choose as your spouse. It should be kept in mind, however, that the alternative choices about which one is seeking Allah's guidance must be permissible within the religion of Islam.

The procedure for *al-Istikhaarah* is to perform two *rak'aahs* of *sunnah* prayer, followed by a *du'aa* for *al-Istikhaarah*. It was reported by Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allah al-Salami (*radiyAllahu anhu*) that the Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) used to teach his companions to make *istikhaarah* in all things, just as he used to teach them *surahs* from the *Qur'an* saying:

> If any one of you is concerned about a decision he has to make, then let him pray two rak'aahs of non-obligatory prayer, then say:
> *Allaahumma innee astakheeruka bi ilmika wa-astaqdiruka biqudratika wa-as'aluka min fadhlika al-adheem. Fa innaka taqdiru walaa aqdiru. Wa ta'lamu walaa a'alamu wa anta allaamul ghuyoob. Allaahumma in kunta ta'lamu anna haadhal-amr khayrun liy fiy deeniy wa-ma'aashiy wa-aaqibat amriy,*
> *fa'qdruhliy wa-yassirh liy thumma baarik liy feehi. Wa in-kunta ta'lamu anna haadhal amr sharrun liy fiy deeniy wa-ma'aashiy was-'aaqibat amriy. Fa asrifh annee wa-srif 'anhu. Wa aqdurh liyal khayr hayth kaana thumma a-rdhiniy bihee.*
>
> O Allah, I consult You as You are All-Knowing and I appeal to You to give me power as You are omnipotent, I ask You for Your great favor, for You have power and I do not, and You know all of the hidden matters. O Allah! If you know that this matter (then mention it) is good for me in my religion, my livelihood, and for my life in the Hereafter (or 'for my present and future life') then ordain it for me, make it (easy) for me and bless it for me. And if You know that this matter is bad for my religion, my livelihood and my life in the Hereafter (or 'for my present and future life') then turn it away from me and turn me away from it and ordain the good for me wherever it be and make me be pleased with it.
> (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 6841; also recorded by al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisaa'i, Abu Dawood, Ibn Maajah and Ahmad).

Upon completion of *al-Istikhaarah*, one should do what he is wholeheartedly inclined towards, disregarding any desires he may have had before performing the prayer. It is not necessary that a dream or vision be seen by the person to guide him towards a decision, although this may be the case. *Al-Istikhaarah* may and should be repeated to continue seeking Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*)'s Guidance in a matter and surely Allah (*Subhana wa ta'ala*) will make the path towards one choice easy for the individual as He is the Best of Planners.

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The Truth behind Valentine's Day

As February 14 approaches, it is hard to ignore the pink and red streamers that hang in the stores, the candy aisles filled with heart shaped chocolates and the valentine cards with drawings of cupid on them. This day actually goes deeper than love…it goes deep into our pockets too. Like all other Western holidays, festivals, and celebrations, Valentine's Day has become, to put it bluntly, another materialistic money-making scheme. The idea behind this day has been that kids give each other cards, millions of dollars are spent on chocolates and flowers for a girlfriend or wife, or a boyfriend or husband. But what is this day really about? Why should Muslims, despite the tempting chocolates and cute cards, not participate in it?

The origin of Valentine's Day has pagan roots, dating back to the pre-Christian Rome days when a feast honoring the Roman goddess of women and marriage was held on February 15. On this day, young women would place their names in an urn, from which boys would randomly draw to discover their sexual companion for the day, the year, and sometimes the rest of their lives. These partners exchanged gifts as a sign of affection and often married.

When Christianity arrived in Rome, there was an attempt to replace this feast with something that was more in line with the Christian ethics. Thus, due to the accounts of three different Saint Valentine's that were coincidentally declared martyrs on February 14th, the date was changed. In one account, St. Valentine became a Saint trying to resist free sex. In another account, an Italian ruler, Claudius II, decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, so he outlawed marriage for young, single men who made up his military. Valentine defied Claudius and performed marriages for young couples in secret. When his actions were revealed, Claudius put him to death. Another version of the story says that Valentine was a holy priest in Rome, who helped Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured. Valentine was arrested and forced to renounce his faith. When this attempt proved futile, Valentine was beaten with clubs, and later beheaded. In the year 496, Pope Gelasius officially changed the February 15 festival to the February 14, St.Valentine's Day, to give Christian meaning to a pagan festival.

So, back to the question…Why should Muslims try to avoid participating in Valentine's Day? Firstly, it promotes Western and non-Islamic ideas about love and romance. Muslims are first, brothers and sisters in faith, not sex objects to each other. Islamic rules of modesty and respect between the sexes need to be taught in this culture. Love and romance are not simple ideas that can be expressed through a valentine or chocolates. It is neither a one-day affair or even an affair of a month, neither is it a relationship based on how much money one has or how good one looks. Un-Islamic ideas like these are emphasized on Valentine's Day. Thus, like other aspects of this culture, Valentine's needs to be examined and analyzed from an Islamic perspective. Secondly, the need to abstain from Valentine's Day is extremely important for us because of our constant exposure to Western secular culture which is permeating into Muslim societies via satellite dishes, television programs and various other forms of very powerful media. If we do not make an effort to resist this cultural onslaught, it may have serious implications on the ideas and future of Muslim children, families and gender relations. Lastly, but most importantly, as Muslims we should make every effort to live our lives Islamically. This means that we should not join non-Muslims in the celebration of their holidays. It is quite easy to be led astray by the dazzling attractions of such non-Islamic celebrations. Yet, we need to resist this temptation, as it is essential that Muslims should be distinct from the non-believers and that we should feel proud of Islam and celebrate our festivals while always remembering and thanking Allah (*subhana wa' tala*) for what he has given us.Allah has revealed:

> **This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.** [Qur'an 5:37]

Hence as Muslims we should refrain from partaking in celebrating Valentine's Day, not only because of its pagan and non-Islamic ideals but also because of the extreme commercialism and extravagance involved with it, both of which are contradictions to the Islamic Spirit.

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Sources:
http://www.islam-qa.com/topics/
http://www.soundvision.com/valentine/

Rexdale Coin Laundry
Washers, Dryers, & Soap & Fabric Softener Dispenser
Washers:
35 lb heavy duty
25 lb heavy duty
18 lb heavy duty
apparment size
20Washers &
18 Dryers
20A Rexdale Blvd.
(at Rexdale Blvd. & Islignton Ave.)
across from International Muslim Organization
(IMO) and Sears Retail Outlet Store

THE BEAUTY OF FORGIVENESS

The Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) has declared that it is a strength, not a weakness, to forgive. He said that forgiveness is divine and that one gets a great *thawab* (reward) when you not only forgive the person who has harmed you intentionally or unintentionally but when you, in return, do him good - *Ihsan*.

As we all know, the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) was the Guide and the model for all Muslims. Therefore, he did not define a concept and leave the students to come up with examples and to apply the concept. On the contrary, he was an example for all of mankind.

The story begins at the time of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) in Madinah. It was the Prophet's (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) habit each and every day to pray *fajr* at the mosque with the rest of the *sahabas* (*radiyaAllahu anhum*) to get the three *thawabs*. The first *thawab* is obtained by praying *Fajr* (the dawn prayer) which Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) has sworn by, in *Surah Al-Fajr*: "Walfajr wa layalin ashr" to stress the importance of this prayer that many Muslims miss. The second is getting the twenty-seven merits for praying in *Jamaat*, which is obviously better than praying alone and getting only one point. The third *thawab* is meeting his Muslim brothers to teach them something new about their religion or answer some of their questions concerning Islam and other religions.

As the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) finished the prayer and was going home, he found that one of the *Kafirs* (non-Believers) had dumped a lot of garbage and man-waste in front of the door of his house. This did not happen just once or twice but many times so that the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) got used to it and never complained to the *sahabas* (*radiyaAllahu anhum*). Put yourself in that same situation. Muhammad (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) was the Prophet of Islam; he could have ordered the Muslims to punish or imprison the man for disrespecting him. This is what a normal person in power would do. But Muhammad (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) was not a normal person, he was the Prophet of Islam whom God had taught and trusted to deliver the message of Islam from above the Seven Heavens through Gibreel (*alaihi assalaam).*

The simplest thing to do nowadays is to call the police and tell them this person is doing you harm through such and such a way. But the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) wanted to give an example that would live on even after his death through the words of speakers and writers. Therefore, he used to clean the garbage from his door everyday. And moreover, one day, when the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) found that there was no garbage in front of his house he became worried that the *kafir* might be sick and went to visit him, the way Muslims should when their brothers get sick. When the man saw the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) he was shocked and asked: " How could it ever be? I throw garbage and man-waste in front of your door everyday and you came to visit me when I am sick. *Ashhad anna la illaha illaAllah (subhana wa ta'ala) wa anna Muhammad RasoolAllah (subhana wa ta'ala)."* (I bear witness that there is no god but Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*)) Thus, Prophet Muhammad (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) converted one of Islam's enemies into a true Muslim believer.

When the man saw the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) he was shocked and asked: " How could it ever be? I throw garbage and man-waste in front of your door everyday and you came to visit me when I am sick. *Ashhad anna la illaha illaAllah (subhana wa ta'ala) wa anna Muhammad RasoolAllah (subhana wa ta'ala)."*

This might be a story that most Muslims are familiar with, but how many of us have given themselves time to think deeply about it? How many of us have asked themselves: Can I act the same way that the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) acted when he encountered this man? Not surprisingly my own answer the first time I asked myself this question was that my response would not be the same. But on a second thought, this is the way each Muslim should act, not only to his/her own Muslim brothers, but also to all people living on earth. This should be the spirit of a Muslim, as clear and as pure as pure water.

There is a great irony in forgiveness that is perhaps what has caused many to accept Islam after a Muslim has forgiven them. The irony lies in that when you do harm to a person intentionally or unintentionally, you normally expect bad payback if the person is strong. If the person is weak you expect him to surrender to your action and do nothing out of total defeat. But you never expect him to do you good, and this is why forgiveness is ironic because the action done by a true Muslim to his brother in Islam or his brother in humanity has to be good in return for bad action. For this instance, the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) again provides the best example:

Ten years after the *Hijra* to Madina, the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) led a huge army of 10,000 Muslims to open Makkah. He ordered them to each light up a small fire on a piece of wood and hold the piece of wood up in his hands. So it was not one or two fires, it was 10,000 fires on the mountains surrounding Makkah one after the other. When the inhabitants of Makkah,

cont'd on p. 21

A man divorced his wife and she married another man who proved to be impotent and divorced her. She could not get her satisfaction from him, and after a while he divorced her. Then she came to the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) and said, "O Allah's Apostle! My first husband divorced me and then I married another man who entered upon me to consummate his marriage but he proved to be impotent and did not approach me except once during which he benefited nothing from me. Can I remarry my first husband in this case?" Allah's Apostle (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said, "It is unlawful to marry your first husband till the other husband consummates his marriage with you." [Narrated by Aisha (*radi'Allahu 'anha*)]

DAWAH

TIME TO COME OUT OF OUR BOXES AND LOOPS!

"There is no God worthy of worship, except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

Yahiya Emerick, in his book How to tell others about Islam, says, "This simple statement is the most powerful declaration ever devised! For beyond the words themselves lies a powerful concept and a compelling ideology. Whole societies, cultures, and empires have been elevated with its application, or ruined by its rejection." The question then is, how come Muslims, who possess such a precious gift or a Way of Life, known as Islam, do not bother to share it with others? How come we, who understand this powerful statement, do not feel the pain at the state of those who find it difficult to believe in the existence of God, or those who are too busy in the enjoyment of this world to even care about God or the Truth, or those who have a spiritual void, or those who live a disoriented life devoid of peace and contentment? There are many among our friends, colleagues, and family members, who are waiting for this message to be revealed to them through our words and actions, on individual and collective levels.

The beloved companions of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*), like Abu Dhar al-Ghifari, Musab bin Umayr, Muadh ibn Jabal, Jafar bin Abi Talib, and many others (*radi'Allahu 'anhum*), were ever ready to let the world know about Islam. It was as if a fire was always burning in their hearts. The spirit of *Dawah*, or calling others towards the Truth, only comes from within. It comes when Muslims develop the feeling of dissatisfaction, restlessness, and sympathy towards the hopeless and discontented people around them. Islam is about giving people hope and noble principles to live by. *Dawah* to Islam is about change and revival in the hearts and intellect of the society. There exists a great deal of evil and chaos in the Muslim and non-Muslim communities, such as young drug addicts, youth in prisons and hospitals, teenage pregnancies, rise in suicidal rates, disintegration of the family system, and more. Nothing, however, seems to move our hearts, souls, and intellect to action!

After realizing the need to accept the responsibility of doing *Dawah* on individual and collective level, the following few concepts and tips may be useful for the *Dawah* purposes in the future:

· ***Dawah* (calling people to Allah) is an obligation, not an option**. The Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said, "Convey this Message, even if only one sentence (or verse)" (Related by Bukhari). He also said, "Learn the required precepts of Islam and the Qur'an, then teach to others, for I will not live forever" (Related by Bukhari). Similarly, Allah commands us, **"There should be a number of you who actively call people to the righteousness; who encourage goodness and forbid evil. These are the ones who shall prosper."** [Qur'an 3:104] This verse, in a nutshell, may be considered the "Mission Statement" for a Muslim's role in this life.

· ***Dawah* is not just about giving out pamphlets on streets or prisons**. It is about sharing and living Islam through our behavior and preaching. Therefore, if we do something immoral or indecent in public, obviously it will harm our *Dawah* efforts. Immodest clothing, usage of foul language, or interacting with the people of opposite gender beyond the limits set by Islam, will project a negative image to non-Muslims.

· **We should practice what we preach**, as Allah says, **"O you who (claim) to believe! Why don't you practice what you preach?"** [Qur'an 61:2]. Thus, the least we can do is try our best to avoid acts that we are not supposed to do!

· **At the same time, perfection is not a prerequisite for *Dawah***, because, had this been the case, then the Prophets (*'alaihum assalam*) would be the only ones allowed to do *Dawah*. Life is an ever-growing circle of study, practice, and improvement! Some companions of the Prophet once asked him, "O Messenger of Allah, shouldn't we refrain from calling others to goodness if we don't practice ALL good things ourselves, and shouldn't we refrain from forbidding wrong things until we ourselves have abstained from ALL the bad." "No," he replied, "You should call others to goodness even if you don't do all good, and you should forbid bad things even if you don't abstain from all of them yourselves," (Reported by Tabarani).

· **Use Wisdom and speak only what is needed**. Often times, we begin to explain Islam to non-Muslims the way we were taught Islam traditionally, without giving the true spirit and wisdom behind the message. For instance, it is not wise to give all the details of the rituals of Prayer and *Wuduh*, to a seeker of Truth, before even explaining why everyone should pray to God. Similarly, generally speaking, it is not wise to use present day Muslims, as examples; instead, we should emphasize how Islam is supposed to change the character of those who truly posses and practice this beautiful faith. In addition, always keep in mind that the more unnecessary information we give away, the more we confuse others. Therefore, we should really come out of these "cultural boxes" or "conventional loops" that limit our vision and potential for an effective *Dawah* to people. As Br. Dawud Wharnsby says, "If someone asks us, *'What do you believe in?'* it is more effective to say, *'I believe in One God'*, instead of saying, *'I believe in Islam,'* because by doing so we automatically open the doors for them to explore Islam, since many of them, at first, would probably prefer to know more about One God, rather than this 'label', called Islam"

· **Let's move out of our "boxes" and "loops"**. It is quite unfortunate to see Muslims today spending a great portion of their lives and efforts on "scholarly" debates or disputes- which may not be a priority for Muslims in these times and in this land. It is quite hypocritical because there are thousands out there who are waiting for our counseling, our time, our advice (*Nasiha*),

our support, and our message. Therefore, our objectives and efforts need to be re-prioritized. As Imam Khalid Griggs once said, "Unfortunately, today, majority of the members of the "*Dawah*" organizations are usually doing *Dawah* to each other, across the table." It is now time to come out of this "box", and start interacting with the real society and think of creative and dynamic ways of projecting Islam to people. *Dawah* is about changing the lives of people before anything else!

· **Our approach towards *Dawah* has to be modified to address the youth and the atheists** - a category that includes a significant portion of the Western Society, consisting of majority of youth today. *Dawah* traditionally meant to us inviting Jews, Christians, Hindus, and others to Islam- i.e. those who at least believed in God, in whatever shape or form. Nowadays however, *Dawah* could also mean inviting faithless people towards religion. The students in schools, universities, and colleges, are the potential recipients of this form of *Dawah*, since this portion of the population represents the height of secularism or atheism in North America! Often times, it's challenging enough to convince them of the virtues of religion in the first place, let alone calling them to Islam. Therefore, in order to establish a belief in the existence of God, before anything else, we should learn how to raise questions about the belief in God and the defects in the theory of evolution, through intellectual and educational discussions. It may not be very productive to give lectures on the concept of *Tawhid* (Oneness of God) and its different forms, if the person doesn't even think God actually exists!

· **Remember not to assume beliefs and never tell someone what they believe.** Learn about other faiths as much as possible. It is a powerful tool that will help us understand and reach out to people more efficiently. For example, if a Hindu or a Christian person comes up to us inquiring about Islam, it is wrong to begin by tearing apart the concept of Trinity or polytheism or by poking holes in their faiths. We should realize that he or she might not be able to even understand what you're talking about, because the majority of people in this society do not even know much about their own 'religion'. Moreover, many don't even agree with every single principle that their faith teaches.

· **Islam is relevant today and it is for everyone!** When speaking of Islam, let's not focus too much on the Islamic glories of the past or other minor details, as we often tend to do. Dwell more on the broader concepts, like *Tawhid*, Prophethood, the Hereafter, and Islam being a solution to their problems. As Malcolm X *(rahimahullah)* once said, "America needs to understand Islam, because it is the one religion that removes the Race problem from its society!" People in problem-ridden West, are more willing to accept this message, if they see Islam has an answer and cure to their social problems, like drugs, AIDS, crimes, teenage pregnancies, deterioration of families, loneliness...etc. and the fact that Islam is able to fill their spiritual void. We have yet to see *Dawah* material on these greatly needed themes.

· **Usage of proper language plays a great role in *Dawah*.** Instead of using "Holy war" to translate the word *Jihad*, use a more comprehensive and proper term, like, "struggle" or "striving". Similarly, avoid using "worship" or "being His slaves" for the word, *Ibada*. Instead it will be much more appealing to use, "service" or "obedience." Try to use a language that is more appealing to North Americans.

Avoid generalizations. Our purpose is to educate and share Islam, not to give "*Fatwas*" or to label them, i.e. it's better to avoid generalizations like: "all present day Christians are atheists in practice", "all youth in the West are Religio-phobic", "all Jews are murderers", "all Hindus hate Islam", "the media always portrays Muslims as terrorists", etc. We all know there are always some sincere and moderate people in every faith and community. Similarly, media is merely a tool, which could also be used for *Dawah* and educational purposes. These generalizations can damage our *Dawah* work if used just for the sake of it.

· **Gender-consciousness is important!** Let's not forget that Islam was the primary force of women's liberation, until some Muslims themselves began to adopt the practices of *Jahiliyya* (ignorant societies) by locking them up in homes. Point out the difference between Islamic "feminism" and the Western feminism. Highlight the freedom that Muslim women enjoyed throughout the Islamic history compared to the women in Europe. Despite all the stereotypes in the media against the role of women in Islam, it is surprising to see that, statistically speaking, more women are converting to Islam today, than to any other religion. Avoid talking about the virtues of polygamy, as there are less than 2% Muslim males in the world who ever practice polygamy, so it shouldn't be a hot topic to be used as a "tool" of *Dawah*.

Finally, let's all keep in mind that most North Americans are searching for some spirituality, as well as a purpose and direction in life. Let's show them through our practice and the beauty of our character that Islam is not for Arabs, Pakistanis, or Africans only, but it is a way of life for North Americans and for everyone else. At the same time, let's not put our Islam in a separate compartment, box, or a loop, to be pulled out only on Fridays or during *Ramadan*.

For further readings on *Dawah* and its tools, please refer to:

Dawah among non-Muslims in the West by Khurram Murad *(Rahimahullah)*

How to tell others about Islam by Yahiya Emerick.

May Allah give us the ability to fulfill the mission of our Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallaam*), i.e. *Dawah*, and may Allah put peace and harmony in our lives, Ameen.

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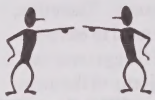
OUR FRIENDS OR OUR FOES?



Recently I was watching a television broadcast on CBC documenting the aftermath of the Gulf War in Iraq. Perhaps a lot has been discussed in regards to this already, and a lot forgotten - including the plight of the Iraqi people.

It was shocking to hear that the U.S. army had used ammunition coated with depleted uranium. What is even more shocking is the fact that Americans were well aware of the potential harms it could cause, yet went ahead and used it during "Operation Desert Storm" as an experiment to observe the real life threats it posed. In the 1950's, the United States Department of Defense became interested in using depleted uranium metal in weapons because it is extremely dense, pyrophoric, cheap, and available in huge quantities in the United States. During the 1960's and 1970's, research and open-air testing at various locations in the United States demonstrated the effectiveness of using depleted uranium in kinetic energy penetrators, which are rods of solid metal shot from guns. Kinetic energy penetrators do not explode; they fragment and burn through armor "due to the pyrophoric nature of uranium metal and the extreme flash temperatures generated on impact." In the 1980's, depleted uranium was also developed for use in tank armor. During Operation Desert Storm, American M1A1, M1, and M60 tanks and British Challenger tanks fired thousands of large caliber depleted uranium penetrators. American A-10 and AV-8B aircraft shot hundreds of thousands of small caliber depleted uranium rounds. American snipers shot 7.62mm and possibly .50 caliber depleted uranium bullets. In addition, one-third (654) of the American tanks used in the war (2,054) were equipped with depleted uranium armor. Depleted uranium penetrators enhanced the tactical advantage of American and British forces over the Iraqi Army's inventory of tanks, but the effectiveness of depleted uranium tank armor was never tested on the field of battle. Iraq did not have DU armor or munitions in its inventory.

Depleted uranium bullets and tank armor were used for the first time in warfare during Operation Desert Storm. American aircraft and American and British tanks fired hundreds of thousands of armor-piercing depleted uranium (DU) penetrators at Iraqi tanks and other armored vehicles. When a depleted uranium round impacts a target, up to 70% of the round burns up, causing radioactive and chemically toxic dust to be scattered in and around the target. This dust can be transported by the wind or in water, and can enter the human body via inhalation, ingestion, or wound contamination. In addition, soldiers inside vehicles hit by DU rounds may be wounded by depleted uranium shrapnel. More than one thousand Iraqi tanks and other vehicles were destroyed and contaminated by DU rounds.

Civilian populations in Kuwait and Iraq are still being exposed to the more than 640,000 pounds of depleted uranium dust and fragments, which remain on Gulf War battlefields. More and more babies are being given birth to prematurely with severe abnormalities. More and more kids are developing tumors and cancers. What the US and it's allies did during Gulf War is nothing less then a repetition of what occurred in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, although to a lesser extent and in any increasingly subtle fashion. Nevertheless, this does not undermine the overriding factor that hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and those living in neighboring countries have been exposed to this, and are at a higher risk of death.

The United States, however, has quietly shoved this issue under the rug. Because after all, what's half a million lives, as long as they belong to third world populations. Even more agitating is the fact that U.S. Secretary of State Madelline Albright has been quoted as saying that half a million lives is a price worth the so called containment/isolation Saddam. Despite inhumane treatment of the Iraqi people, such remarks have continued to be tolerated by the international community including many nations that pride themselves over their democratic system and respect for human rights.

There is no doubt that Saddam Hussain is a thug and a ruthless dictator, but the only losers in the Gulf War are the Iraqi people who continue to suffer on several frontiers – one caused by the deadly illnesses the directly inflicted by the U.S., and the other caused by the sanctions that continue to be in place once again by the U.S. under the U.N. umbrella. In its quest to secure a cheap and continuous supply of oil, and to increase its influence in the wealthy deserts of the Middle East, the U.S. has caused enormous financial losses to all countries in the Middle East, a loss of political stability, and above all a loss of human life.

It's time that Muslims take an adamant stance on this issue, and continue to lobby for the removal of the sanctions and not become complacent. The American military has left the Middle East for the most part, yet their influence continues.

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Forced Marriages *(cont'd from p.9)*

must be sought. It is narrated by Abu Huraira (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wassalam*) said, "A previously married woman shall not be married until she gives consent and a virgin shall not be married until permission is asked from her." In the case of a virgin, her silence indicates her permission.[2] In fact, the rights Islam gives to women, are not offered by other religions. According to Hanafi *fiqh*, although it is preferable that those in charge give the woman in marriage, it is permissible for a lady who is sane and mature to: 1. marry herself to somebody; 2. marry her daughter to somebody and; 3. be a representative on behalf of someone else. However, if the woman marries someone who is incompatible, those in charge can object to the marriage.[3] It is the beauty of Islam, as the *Shaikh* points out, that it doesn't leave us alone to marry any Joe or Mo off the street.

Shaikh Ahmad Ali warns us in his lecture that we must know where to draw the line with respect to our rights and to the rights of our parents. Parents must consult their children and can not force them to marry anyone they do not wish to marry. We are not, however, allowed to argue and debate with our parents. It is *haraam* to say anything that will cause them pain. We are supposed to respect them, love them, and take care of them. (May Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala)* help me and you to treat our parents with patience, love, mercy and respect. *Ameen*). Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) states:

> **Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him,and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.** [Qur'an XVII:23]

If our parents are pleased with us, Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) is pleased. If they are displeased, Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) is displeased with us. Shaikh Ahmad Ali suggests that if one is in a forced marriage type of situation, one should consult religious scholars, ask about the ruling and act upon it within the limits of the *Shariah*.

Parents and children alike need to return to the pure teachings of Islam. The first quality we should look for in a partner is *Deen*. It is piety that will guarantee that one's rights are fulfilled as a spouse *insha'Allah*. May Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) bless us with religious companions and may our marriages overflow with love. *Ameen.*

Anonymous

Notes & Sources:
* pre-Islamic period of ignorance
1. Audiotape on "Forced Marriages" by Shaikh Ahmad Ali. Al-Ma'hadul Islami Islamic Academy, 40 Greaves St, Bradford BD5 7PE Tel: 01274 575600
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

Rights of Husbands & Wives

(cont'd from p.10)

woman share their responsibilities in and out of the house.

In any case, these roles are defined to foster a happy marriage and a peaceful family life, which is important for the proper functioning of the entire society. A woman should obey and respect her husband as long as he is not being unrealistic or is not asking something which asks for disobedience of Allah. And the husband should give preference to the wishes of his wife and take good care of her in all circumstances.

Irum Godil, University of Toronto (St. George), Year 3, Information Systems

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[1] Assadullah, Mir Mohammed "Wedding In Islam.", http://216.230.204.167/islam/Family/marriage/wedding.htm (30 Dec. 2000)
[2] "Women In Islam, Dividing Duties of Husband and Wife.", http://www.islamic-paths.org/Home/English/Issues/Women/Divide_Work.htm (30 Dec. 2000)
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

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Sharifa, "Husband and Wife Relations.", http://www.habbak.com/islam/halaqa/marriage.htm (30 Dec 2000)
"Mutual Rights of Husband and Wife.", http://members.home.net/islam/mutual.htm (30 Dec 2000)

Ways of Hooking Up (cont'd from p. 12)

Finally, I would like to give a word of advice based on experience for new couples who are considering marriage. Make sure that both of you use the blessing of Allah on us, that we have free medical care in this country (or at least most of us), and get a check-up done. It might take a few minutes from your time but it might *insha'Allah* save you years of illness, grief, and regret for you and your family. This will make sure that you are in proper health, *insha'Allah*. It will also help in the early detection of genetic diseases that can be passed on to progeny.

May Allah keep us all in good health and *iman…Ameen*

Moustafa Ragheb, University of Toronto (St. George), Year3, Human Biology in conjunction with TMV staff

Beauty of Forgiveness *(cont'd from p.17)*

who had not accepted Islam, saw this in the middle of the night, they were frustrated and the next morning, when the army entered the Holy city, most of those inhabitants, including the uncle of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) surrendered to the army. The people of Makkah were now prisoners of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) and he could have done anything he wanted to with them. But what did, Muhammad (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) do? He said: "Go, you are free!" To some of us, this may seem illogical. But when the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) says a word or a phrase, it does not come out of his own logic but it is what Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) has ordered him to say. So when he said: "Go, you are free," he did so because he was the messenger of Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) and the guide to all those who would come after him. Here comes the irony again, as a second before he uttered this phrase, all the inhabitants of Makkah thought that they were doomed, but as Prophet Muhammad said, " And I have not been sent except as a mercy for all mankind."

MayAllah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) give us all the strength to forgive, and may he make easy for us the path to heaven and help us to follow the example of our beloved Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*).

Moustafa Ragheb, University of Toronto (St. George), Year3, Human Biology

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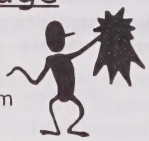
POETRY CONTEST WINNER

This Life Is A Bridge



Alhumdulillah!

Every son of Adam
makes typos,
and the best of those
are the ones who are quickest
with the "backspace" button.

Remove your glasses and your wristwatch
when you enter prayer.

Your Sajdah is above time, beyond space:

"Artists construct a body of work."

Find Creation in the bridge of your nose,
lay the bridge on the ground as commanded.

Cross the bridge at the end of Salah,
looking both ways before crossing -
first right, then left -
and DON'T cross the bridge
on Red.
The Red is The Fire.
Cross on Green - that is The Garden (your home)

And if you look and find the light is Amber,
Run!!
(This life is a bridge; make on it no home)

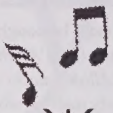
Alhumdulillah!

Abul Arifin, York University, Year 4, English

ANGER

It is limitless,
pursuing endlessly
to emerge from inside.
It takes all sense from me,
and shocks my internal structure with its force.
It is awakened,
from its dormant sleep
by a surge of power that cannot be stopped.
It is sudden,
but the scars are left behind.
Its fires rage from within my blood,
and then are extinguished with a blink of an eye.
the other one...

Song of Love



Oh Allah, let me be beautiful in Your eyes
Oh Allah, let my love be beautiful in Your eyes
Oh Allah, let us be a most beautiful couple in Your eyes –
A model for mankind.

Oh Allah, purify my soul and protect me from evil
Oh Allah, purify my love's soul and protect my love from evil

Oh Allah, let me be beautiful in my love's eyes forever
Oh Allah, let my love be beautiful in my eyes forever

Oh Allah, let me be my love's best friend forever
Oh Allah, let my love be my best friend forever

Oh Allah, let me be sunshine in my love's life
Oh Allah, let my love be sunshine in my life

Oh Allah, let me bring out the best in my love
Oh Allah, let my love bring out the best in me

Oh Allah, I fear darkness within me
Oh Allah, let me never be the cause of anyone's pain

Oh Allah, teach me to love and let me be loved
Oh Allah, make me worthy of my love's love

Oh Allah, when life is bitter give us strength to carry on with a smile
Oh Allah, when it's time to part give us strength to part until we meet again

Oh Allah, do not let our love for one another interfere with our love for You
Oh Allah, let us come closer to You, together forever
Oh Allah, make us all Yours.

Oh Allah, I love You.
Oh Allah, I hope You love us too.
Oh Allah, make my love and I worthy of Your love.

Ameen.

Poetry Corner

For My Father

Leaning my head on a soft shoulder,
Smelling cologne and dove soap.
I am comfortable.
There is a picture of us
On a beach.
I sit in his arms.
We both smile at the camera.
Late walks in the old neighbourhood.
I took big steps to catch up with him;
His strides were so large,
So brisk,
So efficient.
My body was not yet capable of such Strides.
He quizzes my sisters.
He says Moscow,
My sisters say Russia.
He says Tripoli,
They are stumped.
I want to be able to play his game.
Ottawa, I shout.
Nobody responds.
Canada, I say.
I receive a small pat.
I have tried.
Late at night there is the news.
He eats yogurt,
Dipping in a carrot at intervals.
I sit on his lap,
Watching either him or the news.
He gets yogurt on his beard.
I tell him and we laugh;
He wipes it off.
One day it doesn't leave.
His beard graying.
Other times he worked.
It was mostly these other times.
In the dining room-
We had not yet moved to the
Brown house with his study-
In this dining room I try for attention.
I steal his shib-shib.
They are not slippers,
They are shib-shib.
I get so good at this trick
He no longer notices me under the table.
I forget where I hid them.
I seems irritated.
Long trips away from
Us.
He leaves for countries I never knew existed,
Sending postcards,
Bringing back treasures.
He speaks vaguely of riots in China.
Something called Tianeman.
Not enough of it was seen from his hospital window.
Traveling made difficult with diabetes.
Foreign food, not only to taste
But to a body responsible for digestion.
Years later we make a pilgrimage
Together,
Only us.
Feeling the hot rocks of the Parthenon,
Listening to the music of the wind-up piano.
Together.
There has been too much time spent apart.
Too many close calls.
Calls telling us
There has been an accident.
Far away, a lung is punctured by a rib.
Visits after long car rides to see him.
Diminishing body beneath a cotton gown,
Red eyes,
Bandages,
Helpless.
This is not him breathing into a tube,
Smiling with pride because the machine tells him he is recovering.
I fear for him more than any other soul.
His strength is in textbooks,
His weakness is his body.
But he is safe,
Sitting at the kitchen table
Eating his chicken with rice,
Sipping his tea with milk.
He is safe.

Nermeen Mouftah, U of T, Year 1, Pol. Sci

When I'm away.....

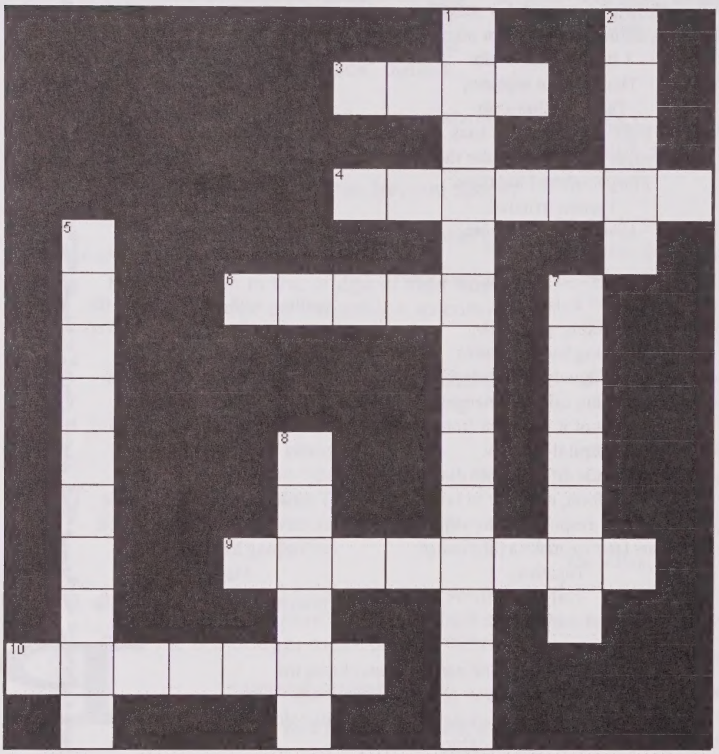
I have a strange feeling that I felt before. I feel like I urgently need a close friend to hold.
I feel like walking with a wounded heart, asking myself why am I apart.
I feel like sleeping with opened eyes, wondering, dreaming, and hearing cries.
I feel like drinking but still always thirsty. I feel that around me life is nasty.
I feel like moving in an endless road, I feel like as if I'm always bored.
I feel like crying with no body hearing me. I feel like trying but no body feels me.
Days are like years, and a year is like a century, but in my heart there is only one country.
I just need a cover and I'll discover, that home is the cure and then no more.

Kimo

SHADOW

The darkness envelopes me
even on the brightest day
I am never free from its coldness
to which I am prey.
It moves silently
without the slightest sound
its feet moving steadily
barely touching the ground.
They say it is the devil
bearing down my back
It is with me at all times
Proving the innocence that I lack.
It is only in my sleep
that I feel it disappear
I am trying to escape
from the thing I most fear.

Krazy Krossword



Across:

3. Bridal money given by the husband to the wife at the time of marriage.
4. The most beloved daughter of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wassallam*).
6. A kind of plant used for dyeing hair, etc.
9. The first wife of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wa sallam*).
10. The marriage banquet.

Down:

1. A speech delivered at the time of concluding the marriage contract.
2. Marriage according to Islamic law.
5. A prayer (of 2 rakat) in which the praying person appeals to Allah to guide him on the right way.
7. The 10th month of the Islamic calendar.
8. A male, whom a woman can never marry because of close relationship (eg. a brother, father).

Yasmeen Khan, UofT (St. George)
Year 3, Human Biology Specialist

Top Seven Ways to Get Married

7. Just slap the title "Dr." in front of your name.
6. Wear tennis shoes with your shalwar kameez and the parents will think you are a decent boy.
5. Kidnap and tie up all the single doctors and engineers in your area.
4. Casually drop your Green Card in front of her parents.
3. Go up to her fatehr and say, "Uncle, this year I fasted 17 days!"
2. Send them pictures with you posing next to your Toyota Corolla.
1. Free samosas to every fifth wedding proposal!

Adapted from a list in *The Islamic Renaissance* - Summer 1996 Issue, Illinois

Matrimonial Advertisements

Young Professional Desiring Matrimony

A 29-year-old financial analyst from LSE, aspiring to find his life partner. I am shying away from meticulous particulars as God's creation is no less then perfect in its every form. Yet the woman sought must be a graduate with a professional degree that can be applied in a job arena wherever I happen to be. Being an avid reader she must certainly have perused *The English Patient* and appreciate the profound science of yoga and meditation. Lastly she must realize the eminence of health conscious living to qualify as the chef in the kitchen of my life.

Colonel seeking son-in-law

Looking for boy for my precious. You, young man shall live far, far away from your parents so that they may not dictate the way my darling shall run her home. You should earn well and provide for her as well, if not better then than I. She should never shed a tear due to you, nor lift a finger in your presence, and should be delivered to my house every 3rd Friday of the month after Jumma prayers, sharp. AND IF EVER, YOUNG MAN, SHOULD THERE, A FLEETING LOOK OF ANTAGONISM DIRECTED AT HER ESCAPE YOU, THEN I SWEAR YOU SHALL CURSE THE DAY THAT YOU WERE BROUGHT FORTH INTO EXISITENCE.

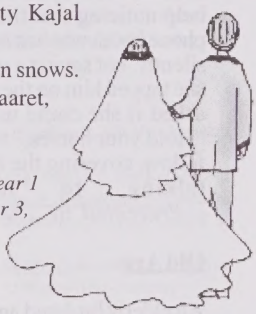
Mother

I believe my son Abid at the age of 32 is ready to settle down. He wishes for himself what I deem appropriate for him. The ideal woman must have completed her masters yet preferably be younger then 23. She must carry herself with the grace and poise of any conventarian of finishing school graduate. Her expanse of knowledge should extend from the cooking time of rice pudding, to the intricate details of Islamic law (*fiqh*), to what shade of Chanel lipstick goes with what shade of Chanel eyeshadow. Despite her worldly accomplishments my son, his home and his family should be her ultimate and primary concern, thus she cannot harbor any whimsical ideas of a professional life. She should be ready to take on the responsibilities of a wife, daughter and mother. Then only might she be good enough.

Vaanting Missus

I am vaanting a gurrel whose skin is like
freashly reaped veats
Whose hairs reach her feets.
She is to be using Black Byooty Kajal
(coal),
She is to be pyoor as freashly faalen snows.
And vaanting to be living in my haaret,
On 59 Gerrard streets.
VEST.

Haya Hussain, UofT (St. George), Year 1
Farah Khan, UofT (St. George), Year 3,
Comp. Sci. Soft. Eng.



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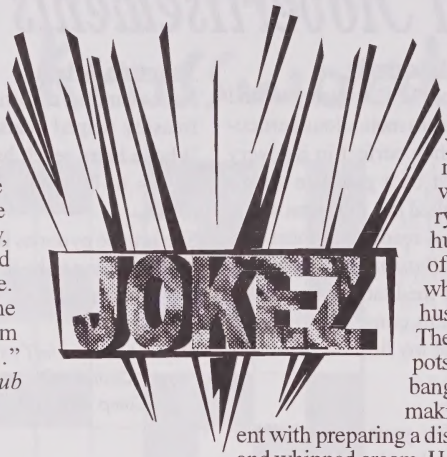
Veal/Chicken Tikka	$7.00
Two Peshawari Kebabs	$5.50

The wife of Rifa'a Al-Qurazi came to Allah's Apostle (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) and said, "O Allah's Apostle! Rifa'a divorced me irrevocably. After him I married 'Abdur-Rahman bin Az-Zubair Al-Qurazi who proved to be impotent." Allah's Apostle (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said to her, "Perhaps you want to return to Rifa'a? Nay (you cannot return to Rifa'a) until you and 'Abdur-Rahman consummate your marriage."
[Narrated by Aisha (*radi'Allahu 'anha*)]



Call of the Mild

The only pay phone in sight was in use, so the woman stood off to the side politely, to wait until it was free. Minutes went by and she couldn't help noticing that the man in the phone booth was just standing there silently, not saying a word. Finally, she tapped him on the shoulder and asked if she could use the phone. "Hold your horses," responded the fellow, covering the receiver. "I'm talking to my wife." *—Presented by The Friars Club*

Old Age

An elderly husband and wife noticed that they were beginning to forget many little things around the house. They were afraid that this could be dangerous, as one of them may accidentally forget to turn off the stove and thus cause a fire, so they decided to see their physician. Their physician
told them that many people their age find it useful to write themselves little notes as reminders. The elderly couple thought this sounded reasonable and left the doctor's office very pleased with the advice. Later, after they returned home, the wife saw her husband heading for the kitchen and asked, "Dear, will you please get me a dish of ice cream?" "Sure." said the husband. "Why don't you write that down so you won't forget?" suggested the wife. "Nonsense," said the husband, "I can remember a dish of ice cream!" "Well," said the wife, "I'd also like some strawberries on it. You better write that down, because I know you'll forget." "Don't be silly," replied the husband. "A dish of ice cream and some strawberries. I can remember that!" "OK, dear, but I'd like you to put some whipped cream on top. Now you really should write it down now. You'll forget," said the wife. "Come on now, my memory's not all that bad," said the husband. "No problem — a dish of ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream." With that, the husband headed off to the kitchen. The wife could hear him getting out pots and pans, stirring things, banging around on the stove and making all sorts of noises inconsistent with preparing a dish of ice cream, strawberries, and whipped cream. He emerged from the kitchen about 15 minutes later. Walking over to his wife, he presented her with a plate of bacon and eggs. The wife took one look at the plate, glanced up at her husband and said, "Hey, where's the toast?"
http://www.geocities.com:0080/SiliconValley/Lakes/9103/001_Old_Age.html

Deathbed

Lying on his deathbed, a loving husband was wavering between life and death when he thought he smelled chocolate chip cookies baking. They were his very favourite, so he dragged himself out of bed, crawled to the kitchen and was just reaching up to take a cookie off the plate when his wife slapped his hand with a spatula. "Don't touch!" she commanded. "They're for the funeral."

—Contributed by Colin Taylor (from Laughter, the Best Medicine, 1999)

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Shattered Vows *(cont'd from p.11)*

'The Women', another verse of similar wording in the *Qur'an*, and recorded sayings of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) will be used. In Chapter 'The Women', the word '*dharb*' describes the time when a woman is feared to be using '*nushuuz*' (i.e. one who belittles her husband's heritage, family, personality, by being verbally abusive), and Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala)* lists rules the husband may follow. First, the husband must kindly give her advice from the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*, and if she does not consider his good advice, he then leaves her bed (since sexual intimacy is essential in a marriage). In addition, if that does not change her '*kibr*', arrogance and superiority over her partner, then he may criticize her, or touch her with a '*miswaak*', according to different scholars. Therefore, in this last stage, the word '*dharb*' does not mean beating, because it would be in violation of all that Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala)* and the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) taught us. There are no narrations, or recorded stories, where the Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) ever misused and abused his wife, verbally or physically. These guidelines are given in order to prevent anger and quick decisions that may lead to violence.

The same word '*dharb*' also exists in Chapter 'Light,' verse thirty-one, when Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) is commanding women to extend their scarves over their bosoms. In this case, the Exalted uses the word '*dharb*' when describing the proper *hijaab* for believing women. It is understood from that verse and from the Prophet's (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) words that to do any physical harm to a woman's body is unlawful. Furthermore, Abu Hurayrah (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*) stated that the Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) said:

"The most perfect believers are those best among them in conduct; and the best among you are the best to their women." (Reported by al-Tirmidhi)

In addition, Mu'aawiyah Ibn Heydah (*radi'Allahu 'anhu*) said:

"I said, `O Prophet of Allah what rights do our wives have on us?' The Messenger (sallAllahu alaihi wasallam) said: `To feed her, when you eat, clothe her if you are clothed, and do not hit her face, and do not call her hurtful names, and do not dissert her (in time of conflict), rather put a space between her and yourself in the house' (to calm oneself and not cause more harm while angry)."
(Reported by Imaam Al-Nawawi)

In these recorded messages from the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*), we learn how Muslim men should treat their wives. The best example being the Messenger (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) himself because through him, we may learn the best conduct and character Muslim men and women may have, to better themselves, and to protect the rights of others.

It is recorded that one of the Prophet's (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) wives (-Sowda' *radi'Allahu 'anha*) had a festival in her house, and decided to send some food to the house of Aisha (*radi'Allahu 'anha*). When the food reached the house, Aisha (*radi'Allahu 'anha*) became jealous and slapped the food from the carrier's hand, throwing it to the ground, while the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) was standing next to her. He smiled, and said that the mother of the believers was angered, and he proceeded to clean the food, and replace it with another. Imagine this humble act of the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*). Rather than getting angry over Aisha's (*radi'Allahu 'anha*) action, he simply humoured her, understanding her feelings at a very young age, without creating any conflict between her and Sowda' bint Zam'ah (*radi'Allahu 'anha*). If we were to follow the Prophet (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) by example, the Muslim *ummah* would eliminate the mistreatment of women and children. It is tragic when a non-Muslim accuses the Muslim community of violating the rights of women, when we are the ones who have the true sources from Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala)*, and the teachings of the Messenger (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*). When a husband disregards his wife's right, he is like the donkey that carries the *Qur'an* on his back, not understanding its value and importance, as Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) described the people of the Book to be, in Chapter 'Friday'. Breaking the silence will lead us to be the best people Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) created us to be: a people who preserve justice, and prevent injustice and corruption. Let us remember the Prophet's (*sallAllahu alaihi wasallam*) words,

"Only an honourable man will honour and respect women, and only 'al-la'iim' (i.e. wicked, lowly, deprived and evil) man will humiliate and degrade women." (Reported by Imaam Ahmed

Huda Mohamed, University of Toronto (St. George), Year 3, Peace and Conflict studies/ Criminology

Sources:
1. The Qur'an
2. Ruuh Al-Deen Al-Islaami, Afif abd-Al-Fatah Dhabara
3. Tafseer Al-Quran, Part One, Ibn Katheer
4. Mukhtasir Saheeh Al-Bukhari 1-2, Imaam Zayd Al-deen Ahmed bin Abd Al-Ladeef al Zubeydii
5. Riyaadh Al-Saalihiin, Imaam Ibi Zakariya Yahya bin Sharf Al-Nawawi Al-Dimishq

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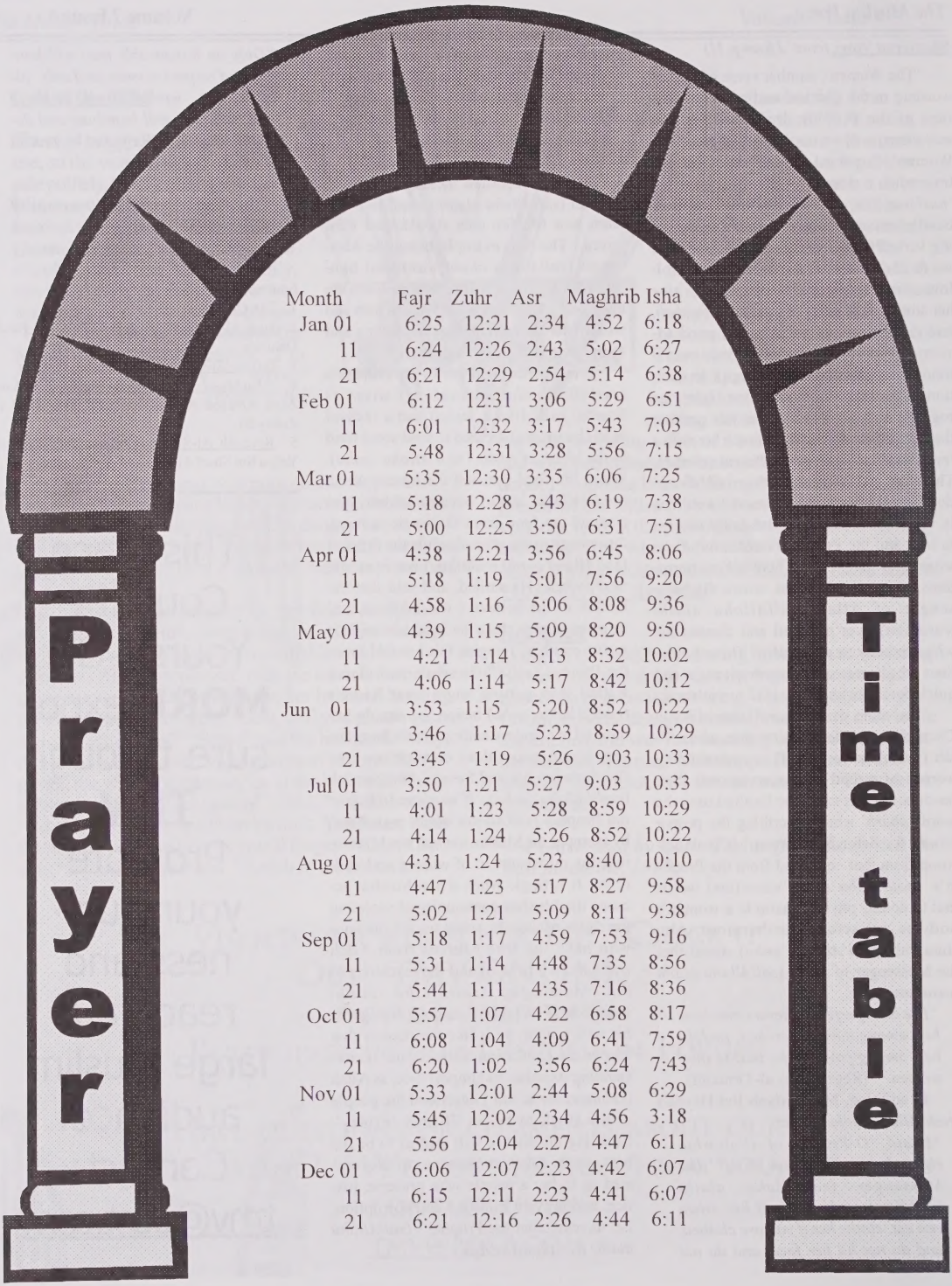
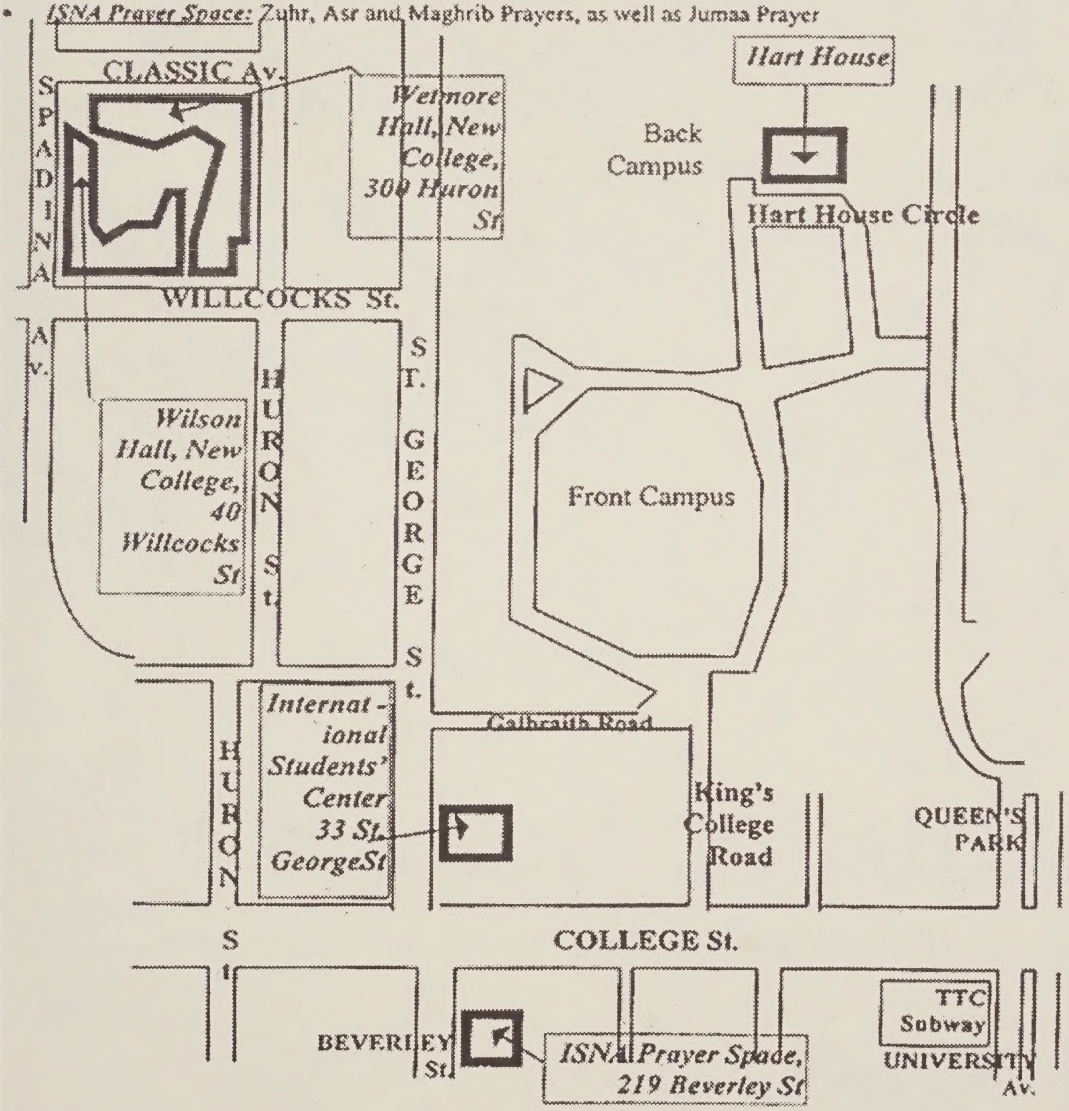


Month	Fajr	Zuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
Jan 01	6:25	12:21	2:34	4:52	6:18
11	6:24	12:26	2:43	5:02	6:27
21	6:21	12:29	2:54	5:14	6:38
Feb 01	6:12	12:31	3:06	5:29	6:51
11	6:01	12:32	3:17	5:43	7:03
21	5:48	12:31	3:28	5:56	7:15
Mar 01	5:35	12:30	3:35	6:06	7:25
11	5:18	12:28	3:43	6:19	7:38
21	5:00	12:25	3:50	6:31	7:51
Apr 01	4:38	12:21	3:56	6:45	8:06
11	5:18	1:19	5:01	7:56	9:20
21	4:58	1:16	5:06	8:08	9:36
May 01	4:39	1:15	5:09	8:20	9:50
11	4:21	1:14	5:13	8:32	10:02
21	4:06	1:14	5:17	8:42	10:12
Jun 01	3:53	1:15	5:20	8:52	10:22
11	3:46	1:17	5:23	8:59	10:29
21	3:45	1:19	5:26	9:03	10:33
Jul 01	3:50	1:21	5:27	9:03	10:33
11	4:01	1:23	5:28	8:59	10:29
21	4:14	1:24	5:26	8:52	10:22
Aug 01	4:31	1:24	5:23	8:40	10:10
11	4:47	1:23	5:17	8:27	9:58
21	5:02	1:21	5:09	8:11	9:38
Sep 01	5:18	1:17	4:59	7:53	9:16
11	5:31	1:14	4:48	7:35	8:56
21	5:44	1:11	4:35	7:16	8:36
Oct 01	5:57	1:07	4:22	6:58	8:17
11	6:08	1:04	4:09	6:41	7:59
21	6:20	1:02	3:56	6:24	7:43
Nov 01	5:33	12:01	2:44	5:08	6:29
11	5:45	12:02	2:34	4:56	3:18
21	5:56	12:04	2:27	4:47	6:11
Dec 01	6:06	12:07	2:23	4:42	6:07
11	6:15	12:11	2:23	4:41	6:07
21	6:21	12:16	2:26	4:44	6:11

Prayer Space on Campus

- *International Students' Center:* 3rd Floor, anytime during ISC hours
- *Multifaith Center - Basement of Wilson Hall:* Observe MSA bookings on the entrance for Zuhr, Asr, and Maghrib Prayers, as well as Jumaa Prayer
- *Hart House:* Jumaa Prayer only, usually Debates Room on 2nd Floor
- *ISNA Prayer Space:* Zuhr, Asr and Maghrib Prayers, as well as Jumaa Prayer



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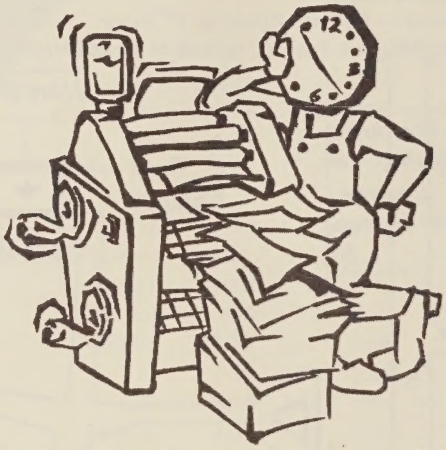

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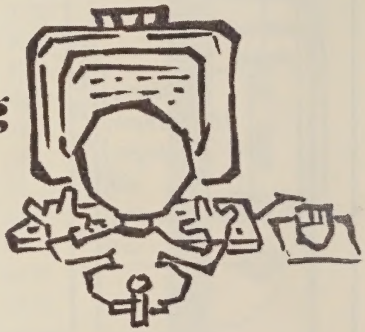

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✓ Business Forms	✓ Envelopes	✓ Catalogues
✓ Newsletters	✓ Business cards	✓ Rubber Stamps
✓ Graphic Design	✓ Books	✓ Resumes
✓ Carbonless Forms	✓ Continuous Forms	✓ Price Lists
✓ Sales Bulletins	✓ Announcements	✓ Invitations

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